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Joseph Aloysius Dillon, M.D.

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JOSEPH ALOYSIUS DILLON, M.D.

President, Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds, Editor and Business Manager of THE LINACRE QUARTERLY.

One, whose whole life was truly a Catholic one, and who during the last years gave largely of his time and strength to further the work of Catholic Physicians' Guilds and, in particular, to their official organ, THE LINACRE QUARTERLY, died on May 3, 1939, after six weeks of intense suffering due to cardiac trouble.

Joseph A. Dillon was born in New York City sixty-nine years ago, the oldest son of intensely Catholic parents. His entire education was received in Catholic schools and in a Catholic college, and he, in turn, sent each of his four children to schools and colleges where they were under the guidance of Priests, Brothers or Sisters. He was a firm believer in a Catholic education for Catholic people.

His whole medical career was largely connected with Catholic work. After graduating from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, he interned for two years in St. Vincent's Hospital, New York City, going from there to the New York Foundling Hospital, also in charge of the Sisters of Charity, for an additional year of specialized work in pediatrics. This started a service which was to endure for forty-three years, during which time he served in every capacity from Assistant Resident Physician to that of President of the Medical Board and Senior Attending Pediatrician. Due to his unbroken connection with the hospital for so many years, his sincere admiration of the work of the Sisters, and his love for the little children entrusted to them, the Sisters came to rely on his advice, for they found that he was ever ready to bring his trained mind and his fatherly heart to bear on any problem connected with the work of the Hospital. As one of the older Sisters once exclaimed: "We are the Sisters here, but he is the father of the institution."

He specialized in pediatrics, but as the years went on and the Birth Control movement grew, and spread its evil influence even into the homes of young Catholic couples, he made a special study of the Rhythm Theory, so as to be able to give proper Catholic advice where needed. Ever kind of heart, and never willing to condemn others, he did untold good among the young "unmarried mothers" at the Foundling Hospital. As one of them said when she heard of his death: "He was always so kind to us, he never scolded and he never scorned us, but he gave us such good fatherly advice, that we will never forget him. If we had only known him before we got into this trouble!"

As soon as the Catholic Physicians' Guild movement was started in this country, he became deeply interested and was one of the organizers and earliest Presidents of the Manhattan Guild. When it looked as though THE LINACRE QUARTERLY would have to be given up on account of lack of support, he volunteered to become its Business Manager, and succeeded in putting it on a sound financial basis. When LINACRE was without an editor, he stepped into that breach, and with so much success that unsolicited subscriptions have recently come in from such far-away countries as Ireland and Belgium, England and France, Hawaii and Korea. Only a few months ago, one of the Jesuit Fathers at Oxford, an internationally-known scholar, sent a letter saying that a copy of LINACRE had fallen into his hands and that he had not laid it down until he had read it from cover to cover. Words like these, only spurred Doctor Dillon on to produce a still better journal and one that would be even more helpful to Catholic physicians. It was his dream that some day it would be possible to contact all Catholic students in secular medical colleges and all Catholic internes in non-Catholic hospitals throughout the country, so as to send them THE LINACRE QUARTERLY free of charge, that they might become interested in Guild work and familiar with Catholic medical ethics. He did what he could in New York; perhaps the idea will be taken up by others elsewhere.

At his funeral, the Church, accommodating 1200, was crowded as for a Sunday Mass. After the final Absolution, the nurses of the Foundling Hospital, the Sisters of Charity, Dominicans, Sisters of Mercy, and Sisters of Notre Dame, the visiting priests and Celebrants, formed a Guard of Honor on both sides of the center aisle from Sanctuary to vestibule, through which his body was carried—a touching last tribute of grateful love and affection. May he who did so much good on earth, be an inspiration to the younger men, and may his soul, always as humble and sweet as the souls of the little ones with whom he came so much in contact, rest in peace!